

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 86

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to recognize George Kazuo Nishimura upon his receipt of the Congressional Gold Medal for his military service during World War II.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to honor those many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, extraordinary efforts were required to provide for Americans of foreign decent to exert their patriotism and bravery as members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, George Kazuo Nishimura of Montgomery County is one such estimable person who volunteered and served from 1942 until 1946 when he was honorably discharged at the very respectable rank of second lieutenant; and

WHEREAS, as a young man living in Hawaii in 1941, eighteen year old George Nishimura witnessed firsthand the December 7<sup>th</sup> attack on Pearl Harbor. So deeply was he moved by what he observed that dark and wretched day that his soul was stirred to patriot action, but, alas, his Japanese heritage barred his participation in the military, at least at that time; and

WHEREAS, presidential action by Franklin Delano Roosevelt one year later brought about the formation of a special military unit comprised solely of Japanese American soldiers, the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, giving credence and credibility to the physical endurance, intellectual prowess, and unique cultural skills they possessed which proved to be valuable assets in wartime efforts; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nishimura and one brother were accepted into the 442<sup>nd</sup>, and he was recruited into the Military Intelligence Service language school in 1943; upon completion of that training, he moved into the Pacific Theater and worked in multiple locations as an interpreter for the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the valiant contributions of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, also known as the Nisei or second generation soldiers, the United States Congress bestowed the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award the Nation can bestow, collectively upon that unit, the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, and the Nisei who served in the Military Intelligence Service; the award ceremony was held on November 2, 2011; and

WHEREAS, due to an inadvertent error that occurred in conjunction with a battlefield promotion Mr. Nishimura received, his name was dropped from the 442<sup>nd</sup> roster, causing a lack of notification and his precluding participation in the 2011 ceremony; and

WHEREAS, George Kazuo Nishimura has a history of superlative military service for the United States and is fully deserving of recognition for that service and receipt of the same bronze replica copy of the Congressional Gold Medal that his brothers in arms previously received; and

WHEREAS, on February 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year, Mr. Nishimura will celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of his birth, and on that day, some sixty-seven years after his military service ended, he shall receive the honorary recognition of his grateful Nation in the form of his Congressional Gold Medal replica; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and appropriate that this General Assembly should pause to fondly reflect on the long life that has been well lived by George Kazuo Nishimura, giving particular reflection to the glass ceiling shattered by this fine man and his comrades who, given the opportunity, proved the devout patriotism and courage of Japanese Americans to protect and defend their chosen homeland; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we congratulate George Kazuo Nishimura up his receipt of the Congressional Gold Medal for his military service in the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team unit organized specifically for the service of Japanese Americans during World War II.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we congratulate Mr. Nishimura on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday and wish him good health and personal happiness as he journeys into his tenth decade of life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.